

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S BRIEFING OF FOREIGN MINISTER TAQLA

1. FOLLOWING IS GUIDANCE FOR AMBASSADOR TO USE IN BRIEFING FOREIGN MINISTER TAQLA ON STATUS OF ARAB-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS.

2. BELIEVE IT USEFUL FOR AMBASSADOR TO BEGIN WITH GENERAL BACKGROUND REVIEW, GOING BACK TO EARLY SUMMER. SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF SYRIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT AT END OF MAY FOLLOWING ON EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT IN JANUARY MARKED THE CLOSE OF FIRST PHASE OF NEGOTIATIONS AND BEGINNING OF A SECOND STAGE. DURING AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER SECRETARY KISSINGER AND PRESIDENT FORD HELD SERIES OF INTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS IN WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK WITH SENIOR REPRESENTATIVES OF ISRAEL, EGYPT, JORDAN AND SYRIA. THESE CONSULTATIONS WERE DESIGNED TO REACH AN UNDERSTANDING OF HOW NEGOTIATIONS WOULD PROCEED AFTER THE RABAT ARAB SUMMIT. SECRETARY KISSINGER'S TRIP TO MIDDLE EAST IN EARLY OCTOBER WAS DESIGNED TO REFINE A STRATEGY FOR BEGINNING NEGOTIATIONS.

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3. STRATEGY DEVELOPED DURING AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER CONSUL-

TATIONS WAS BASED ON RECOGNITION THAT NONE OF THE GOVERNMENTS DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE NEGOTIATION COULD BE

EXCLUDED IF PROGRESS WAS TO CONTINUE TOWARD A PEACE SETTLEMENT. IT WAS ANTICIPATED THAT NEXT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS WOULD LEAD TO FURTHER AGREEMENTS ON MILITARY DISENGAGEMENT, INVOLVING SOME ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL AND SOME KIND OF RECIPROCAL UNDERTAKINGS ON ARAB SIDE.

4. WITH REGARD TO THE NEGOTIATIONS OVER THE WEST BANK, WE BELIEVED THAT THE ONLY PRACTICAL WAY TO PROCEED WAS TO BEGIN THESE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF ISRAEL AND JORDAN. THE PURPOSE OF SUCH NEGOTIATION WOULD HAVE BEEN TO RESTORE ARAB AUTHORITY TO SOME PORTIONS OF THE ARAB-POPULATED WEST BANK, A STEP WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN OF CONCRETE BENEFIT TO THE PALESTINIANS. HOWEVER, RABAT SUMMIT DECISION RECOGNIZING PLO AS SOLE REPRESENTATIVE OF PALESTINIANS AND RELIEVING JORDAN OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR NEGOTIATING DISPOSITION OF WEST BANK ALTERED SITUATION AND MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO PROCEED AS PLANNED IN THIS AREA. ISRAEL HAS STATED THAT IT IS NOT PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE WITH PLO, WHICH REFUSES TO STATE ITS READINESS TO NEGOTIATE PEACE WITH ISRAEL AND CONTINUES TO MOUNT TERRORIST ACTIONS AGAINST IT.

5. RABAT SUMMIT DECISION ON PLO CAUSED A DELAY IN TIME-TABLE AND MADE IT NECESSARY TO BEGIN CONSULTATIONS ANEW. THE FIRST STEP IN THIS PROCESS WAS SECRETARY'S VISIT TO MIDDLE EAST IN EARLY NOVEMBER; NEXT STEP WAS ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON ON DECEMBER 9. WE ARE NOW CONTINUING CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PARTIES THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS (FOREIGN MINISTER WILL HAVE NOTED THAT AMBASSADOR EILTS WAS CALLED TO CONFER WITH SECRETARY IN BRUSSELS) AND WE EXPECT FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON EARLY IN JANUARY FOR FURTHER TALKS.

6. AMBASSADOR SHOULD SAY THAT WHILE WE ARE FULLY AWARE OF DIFFICULTIES WE DO BELIEVE DOOR TO NEGOTIATIONS REMAINS OPEN AND THAT PARTIES CONTINUE TO WANT TO REACH A PEACEFUL
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SETTLEMENT. USG FOR ITS PART IS DETERMINED TO PURSUE ITS EFFORTS AND WILL BE DOING SO ACTIVELY IN COMING WEEKS. WE SEE NO REALISTIC ALTERNATIVE TO CONTINUING STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH IF US IS TO CONTINUE PLAY EFFECTIVE ROLE AS WE WISH AND INTEND TO DO. ANY OTHER APPROACH WOULD, WE FIRMLY BELIEVE, LEAD TO EARLY STALEMATE AND ALL THE DANGERS THAT WOULD ENTAIL.

BUT IF AMBASSADOR IS ASKED WHETHER NEXT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE SOLELY BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL OR WITH

OTHERS PARTICIPATING AS WELL, HE MAY ASSURE TAQLA THAT WE HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD ULTIMATELY ENCOMPASS ALL PARTIES, THOUGH FOR PRACTICAL REASONS IT IS UNLIKELY THAT ALL COULD NEGOTIATE AT SAME TIME.

8. IF QUESTION OF RESUMPTION OF GENEVA CONFERENCE ARISES, AMBASSADOR MAY SAY US SUPPORTS RESUMPTION OF CONFERENCE AT APPROPRIATE TIME, AND WHEN OTHER PARTIES TO CONFERENCE DESIRE IT, BUT BELIEVES IT ESSENTIAL ADEQUATE PREPARATIONS BE MADE TO ASSURE THAT CONFERENCE CAN PRODUCE RESULTS DESIRED AND NOT STALEMATE. KISSINGER

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